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WHAT ENGLISH LITERATURE GIVES US. ENGLISH literature gives all who can enjoy it a fund of pleasure, of the great amount of which we are not apt to be quite aware till we run over a few of the items. There are the Waverley Novels—in direct contemplation, only the talk of an old-fashioned Scotch gentleman, who died a few years ago—or, in a still more gross consideration, but a few masses of printed paper. Yet, in effect, what are they! To how many thousands upon thousands has life been made less painful or more delightful by these charming tales! The world would have gone on without them, no doubt, but it would not have gone on so agreeably. There would have been an infinite deal less happiness in it during the last twenty-five years, if they had not been written. How much has been done for our enjoyment even by one or two of the characters—Caleb Balderstone, for instance, or Dugald Dalgetty, or Dominic Sampson. These are ideal beings, but do we not feel positively richer by knowing them—by having it in our power at any time to call them up before our minds, and inwardly smile at what is ludicrous about them? In like manner, is it not a luxurious sympathy which we feel respecting the fortunes of Ravenswood, all imaginary as he is. These beings take their place among our acquaintance, and the most delightful of all acquaintance they are. We have only to take up a book, and lo we mingle at once in their society, as if unconsciously carried into it through the air. Such books are as show-holes in the walls of this common world, through which to look into one full of the gay, the romantic, and the beautiful. The blind may be slipped aside, and our eye applied, in the smokiest of cottages, as in the most gorgeous of palaces, and the fairy scene will be the same in each case. And we command the show at any time. It will lull us after the excitement and fatigues of labour, and it will beguile us of the languor of monotonous retirement and solitude. We may be sad or joyous, eager and full of hope, or mistrustful of all the good things of life; but our accidental mood is of no consequence when we have once fixed ourselves at the raree-show of the Waverley fictions, for then all of ourselves sinks, except the consciousness of great enjoyment.

Thousands of other things there are in our literature, which we feel to be amongst the most precious of our possessions and privileges. Cowper's Task is as good as an estate to every reading man in the kingdom. There are some of Burns's songs, the loss of which, if it were possible, would be to me more deplorable, as far as I am personally concerned, than the total repeal of the Habeas Corpus Act. The blotting out of the Vicar of Wakefield from most minds, would be more grievous than to know that the island of Borneo had sunk in the sea. The single whimsicality of the gross of green spectacles, and Jenkinson's one piece of learning about the cosmogony, could not be lost without the most serious detriment to all concerned, namely, the whole English public. Certainly, it would be less distressing to lose all our territorial interest in the island of New Zealand, than to cease to know and relish the quiet joke of the vicar respecting his wife's schemings in household economy, that he had not perceived that they ever got any richer by them. Then there is Beau Tibbs in the essays of the same writer, with his shivering nankens, and that delightful suburban attie, the view from which was so much prized by Bill Squash, the Croole. What would we not give up to retain Beau Tibbs! The poor fellow dined on all that was slight and slender; but he did not feel that he did so from poverty—it was all a matter of taste—he hated your immense

loads of meat, for that was "country all over." Surely, in the recollection of such things we have something still better than solid philosophy. Going back a little farther, how does the heart leap up when we recollect the many admirable things of Fielding and Smollett. Parson Adams himself gilds the whole time. What simplicity, what true goodness!—verily, the world's history gives us few characters equal to him—and yet we feel that he is natural. Poor and ragged is this sturdy son of primitive unvarnished honesty, and he never ceases to be a subject of merriment to the reader—yet how wonderful the effect of genuine virtue, he never ceases to be respectable, even when chased by the squire's dogs, Thunder, Wonder, Plunder, and Blunder, or soused by the waggish doctor in the tub. In the same book, how are we taught to relent in all our stern conventionalities, when the robbed, wounded, and naked Andrews being refused succour by the whole of the inmates of the stage-coach, we are told that "he must have perished, unless the postilion (a lad who has since been transported for robbing a hen-roost) had voluntarily stripped off a great-coat, his only garment, at the same time swearing a great oath (for which he was rebuked by the passengers), 'That he would rather ride in his shirt all his life, than suffer a fellow-creature to lie in so miserable a condition.'" The humours of Partridge—what more is needed than to allude to them! The same of Strap, that most original of humble dependents and faithful followers. Morgan, too, who, when expelled from the presence of the exquisite sea captain for his redolence of tobacco, sat down and only whistled a Welsh ditty. This book is not perfect, certainly; but yet who would give it for many that are, or pretend to be so! Then the dinner after the manner of the ancients. The French cook sinking on his knees, while his master's sword is at his throat, and exclaiming in piteous accents, "Spare me the mortification of the honey and oil!" The "indecent phenomenon" of Pallet sitting transfixed by the atrocious taste of the soup into the attitude of a leaden river god, with the liquor flowing out of both sides of his mouth. The pie of dormice liquored with syrup of white poppies, and the sow's stomach filled with a composition of all else that is horrible, which, when Pallet started up and drew the table-cloth after him, was pitched into the lap of the dainty Italian count. What a flow of grotesque and laughter-compelling images! Turn we from Pickle to Clinker, and how do we find the matter for mirth kept up! The malaprop Jenkins, with her "Oh Molly Jones, Molly Jones!" The tabbiest of tabbies, Tabitha. Lesmahago, most scranky of captains—think of him descending the ladder in his night-gown when the false alarm of fire was given. "Mat," cried the knight, "crown me with oak, or ivy, or laurel, or parsley, or what you will, and acknowledge me to be a *coup de maître* in the way of waggery—ha, ha, ha! Such a *camiciata scagliata beffata*!—O che roba—Oh what a subject! Oh what a caricature! Oh for a Rosa, a Rembrandt, a Schalken! Zooks, I'll give a hundred guineas to have it painted—what a fine descent * *! What lights and shadows! What a group below! What expression above! What an aspect! Did you mind the aspect!—ha, ha, ha!—and the limbs, and the muscles—every toe denoted terror!—ha, ha, ha!—then the blanket! Oh what costume! St Andrew! St Lazarus! St Barnabas!—ha, ha, ha!"

There are some books usually read in youth, and without which youth would not be what it is. Of these are Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver. How youth passed long ago, when there was no Crusoe to waft it away in fancy to the Pacific, and fix it upon the lonely doings of the shipwrecked mariner, is inconceivable;

but we can readily suppose that it must have been essentially different. The first reading of Crusoe is now a feature in every man's biography. Gulliver is not so indispensable, but yet the having him is much to be rejoiced in. Was ever such an air of reality given to the totally extra-natural! This is so perfect in its way, that, once get over the difficulty as to the smallness of the Lilliputians and the bigness of the Brobdingnagians, and every thing else appears as just what was to be expected. In Lilliput, the rations dispensed to the colossal stranger are as much as 1728 ordinary men of the country could eat. Now, this is mathematically what it ought to be, to be in keeping with his comparative size, for, the Lilliputians measuring only inches for feet with Mr Gulliver, we must, in order to find his size as compared to theirs, take the square of 12, which, being cubed, gives exactly 1728. This may give some idea of the care which Swift must have taken to preserve all proper analogies between his hero and the novel beings amongst whom he sojournd. It reminds us of Scott's riding from Stirling to Loch Katrine at a stretch, to make sure that he would be within the bounds of the probable in representing Fitzjames as doing so. Laputa and the Houynhynms are not boys' books; they are satires for men, or rather outlets for the spleen of the unfortunately constituted author. Boys do not understand them, and consequently do not care for them. But what a fund of entertainment there is for us in the two other sections! The affair at the conflagration of the palace is perhaps the very drollest thing in all fact or fiction.

The Arabian Nights' Entertainments are not ours by birth, but they have nevertheless taken their place amongst the similar things of our own which constitute the national literary inheritance. They bring us into a considerably different world from any other we are acquainted with. The caliph, the eadi, the Mahomedan faith, genies, enchanters, are the prominent novelties they display to us. There is a fine want of precise outline about every thing in the book. We see as through some prismatically disturbing medium. What a dreamy romantic grandeur, for instance, in the story of the gold fishes in the lonely lake, and the prince of whose body the lower half had been transformed into black marble. The stories of the dead city and of the magnetic island, which drew out the nails of vessels, and shipwrecked the mariners, are of the same kind. How wild and strange the tale of the calendar on the uninhabited island, to which a merchant comes to immure his son for a year, that he may elude the prophecy which has doomed the youth to destruction within that period—what a sense of ruthless destiny falls on the reader when the accident takes place by which the lad is killed!—and what a distressing sense of pity for the father, who immediately after comes, and finds his body. The whole idea of the three calendars, kings' sons, each blind of an eye, who meet at the gates of Bagdad, is a fine one, filling the mind with a pleasing sense of the inexplicable. All the barber's stories are excellent, from that of Alnaschar who, in his sanguine dream of prospective greatness, kicked over the basket of stoneware which was to be the basis of his fortune, to that of the blind one who was so oddly entertained by the Barmecide. Zobiede figures throughout as a fine specimen of womanly fortitude and good sense, and Haroun is a noble person in all respects. Altogether, it is a glorious book, and one to which we cannot well show enough of respect. Good as it ever was, it is said to be greatly improved in Mr Lane's new edition, which I have not seen, but which I would need to see before I could believe an allegation so contrary to all that could have been presupposed.

The Essayists occupy a conspicuous place in the literature of the last century; but somehow I do not feel disposed to set much store by them. Their fault, or, let us be gentle, their misfortune, is, that they do not relate so much to human nature, as to some of its temporary modes. There is a sad deal too much about hoops and flounces and rolled stockings, and enforcements of little moralities which no gentleman now thinks of disobeying; and then the Flirtillas, and Eudocias, and Eugeniuses, and Hymenuses, are stiff old frumps at the best. The whole reminds one of an exhibition of wax-work and old dresses. Yet there are fine things amongst them too—Sir Roger de Coverley, for instance, that admirable Old-English gentleman, so humane, so little thinking of the current of the world, so unreflecting on every thing beyond the traditional habits and duties of his station and locality. Here also we have the majestic moral melancholy of Johnson, and the fine pathos of Mackenzie. But, after all, it must be a selection from that long line of essays which can give pleasure now-a-days.

Come we now to Pope, that prince of sayers of acute and exquisite things—that most mellifluous of all the rhetorical class of poets amongst whom he flourished. Fashion has set him a little aside, which it can never do with an author who has not written in some measure according to a fashion; but he was a fine spirit and a great poet, nevertheless, and English literature would show a mighty blank indeed, were he taken out of it. What nicety in his Essay on Criticism—what brilliant polish in his Rape of the Lock—what superb sorrow and passion in *Eloisa*, where the feeling is almost made true by its vehemence, in spite of the constantly counteracting influence of the diction—what penetration and expansiveness of view in the Essay on Man—and what a splendid English epic in the translation of the *Iliad*! The verses to the memory of the unfortunate lady alone would stamp Pope a poet, if there were nothing else to make him out that, as well as a great ethical writer. The *Dunciad* and all the other satires may be given up—they are decidedly not pleasing. But the remainder of his writings are a precious possession of the people in whose tongue they were written; and such, no doubt, they will ever be. Dryden is even better than Pope. He has immense masculine energies. There is a lashing strength about his verse that no other writer approaches. His works are the farewell of the sound old English, for which the stiffened and glistened language of the last century was the substitute, and which there has latterly been a disposition to revive. Dryden is also much out of view, but most undeservedly. Few know what a treasure of thought and expression lies in his *Hind and Panther* and *Fables*. We are apt, in the large attention we pay to modern literature, to set down him and Pope in our minds as scarcely poets at all, or at the best good versifiers; but when we open their works, and actually read them, we cease to wonder that our fathers and grandfathers talked of these men as something only a little lower than the gods.

Going back only a little farther, we come to Milton, with his grand Christian poem—to Butler, with his *Hudibras*, the wit of which is so exquisite as to become poetry—to Waller, and Cowley, and Herbert, and Herrick. Then to the cavalier poets Lovelace, Suckling, and Carew, who loved their unfortunate master with a zeal which was in itself more poetical than the nine-tenths of even good verse. Next in retrogression, we find the dramatists—the English dramatists, for they only are English—He whose name is too trite from extremity of fame to be mentioned, the learned Jonson, the sweet Fletcher, the soul-harrowing Ford, and the romantic Webster. A little earlier, and we have Spenser, with his endless tissue of beautiful allegory—a little earlier still, we have the fathers of their era, Surry and Wyatt. Before this time, some giants loom through the obscurity that has invested them. There is the admirable Scottish Dunbar, a poet of manners and morals little behind Pope. There is Chaucer, one of the most correct and unaffected of poetical painters, and only neglected because his language has ceased to be understood. And, finally, there is Barbour, the writer of a most delightful epic, which has all the advantage of being a true history—namely, *The Bruce*.

A class of compositions altogether apart from all that have yet been adverted to, remains to be noticed. These are the songs and ballads, whether of England or of Scotland. No era can be mentioned for these compositions: they have glimpsed forth from the darkness of past ages, as stars come by night into the sky, without any one being able to tell exactly when they first became visible. No authors' names can be mentioned for them: they have sprung forth like the unbidden beauty of the prairie, which no one can tell how it became planted. Involuntary gushings they would appear to have been of that "faculty divine," which has resided at all times in the bosoms of the

people, and may or may not have regular professors, as the accident of culture may direct.

Sweet syren, breathe the powerful strain!
Lochryon's dame!—sails the main;
The crystal towers enchanted see!
"Now break," she cries, "ye fairy charms!"
As round she sails with fond alarms,
"Now break, and set my true love free!"
Lord Barnard is to greenwood gone,
Where fair Gil Morrice sits alone,
And careless combs his yellow hair;
Ah! mourn the youth, untimely slain!
The meane of Lord Barnard's train
The hunters' mangled head must bear.
Or change these notes of deep despair,
For love's more soothing tender air:
Sing how beneath the greenwood tree,
Brown Adam's love maintained her truth,
Nor would resign the exiled youth
For any knight the fair could see.

In these terms did the enthusiast Leyden express that devotion to ballad literature which made him once start away from Edinburgh to the distant vale of the Liddel, on the Border, for the purpose of obtaining from a certain crane but one missing stanza. Nor less are the charms of the song class of our traditional poetry. The Cowdenknowes will be for ever vocal with the sweetest of verse, and the Marion of the Ewe-Buchts must shine as a star unto all time.

What is above written gives but the heads of the wealth which we possess under the name of English literature. The addition of the inferior and yet worthy names would swell the account, like the putting down of ciphers on the right hand side of a number. And is not this substantial wealth, albeit it is not of the kind which the political economists insist so much upon, that kind which, as they say, has an exchangeable value? Does any man think otherwise, let him only reflect what would be our condition, if no literature, ancient or modern, existed. The accumulation of these stores of the thoughts and fancies of eminent minds, is just like the construction of public works in a country; and a country without a literature is like a country in which as yet no roads have been formed, no bridges thrown over rivers, nor any halls of popular assembly built. But England is in both these respects a wealthy country. It has been put by our fathers into our hands, furnished with an amount of physical conveniences and sources of comfort beyond all precedent, and endowed with an intellectual inheritance such as no other country ever had. Evils manifold may affect it, if some will have the case to be so; but, amidst all that troubles her, there still remains, unullied, intact, ever ready for the solacement of her thinking sons, the deathless productions of her intellectual great.

THE STORY OF GERALDINE,

BY HER FRIEND.

It is now between forty and fifty years since my sister and I were residing near the beautiful village of Carwell, in a romantic part of England, now little visited, but which at that time was at the height of that ephemeral reputation which the most newly-discovered spa is sure to obtain among our novelty-loving countrymen. The bustle and gaiety of Carwell have long passed away: the faculty no longer consider its springs a specific for every mortal malady; nor do the great world, wearied of the splendour of their ancestral halls, hasten to its hotels, and strive, by submitting to temporary inconveniences, to acquire a new zest for the enjoyment of their homes. All is now stillness and solitude, but to my mind's eye it will ever be pictured as the place that it then was, rather than as it now is.

My sister and I were just of age at the time of which I write; we had been left orphans at too early an age to know our loss; and since leaving school, we had passed our time in visiting our numerous connections; but immediately on obtaining possession of the large fortune which, by the will of our father, was to become ours on our twenty-first birthday day, we determined to take a beautiful little residence for a few months, in the immediate neighbourhood of Carwell, and leave our permanent abode for the present undecided. The summer months passed rapidly away, and I believe seldom have any young heiresses so thoroughly enjoyed the adulation and flattery heaped upon heiresses all the world over, as we did. We were expecting to leave our lovely Orange Bower (for so was our cottage called) in about a fortnight, when one bright autumnal morning, finding my sister not ready for breakfast quite so soon as myself, I put on my bonnet, and called my little dog Fanchon, to take a scamper with me through the adjoining lanes, intending to surprise Harriet on my return with the information that a certain circuit had been made in about one-third of the time usually allotted to such an expedition. I had not gone far,

however, before I met a woman whose cottage I had often visited, and who, by the depth of her courtesy, and a certain earnestness of gaze, seemed to say as plainly as any words could speak, "If you were not in such a hurry, Miss Emily, I would tell you something that would interest you very much." I paused, and she immediately began to ask me if I had heard of the dreadful accident that had happened to the morning coach about an hour before. It had been overturned, the coachman and guard killed on the spot, the outside passengers severely injured, and of the inside ones, who were merely a respectable-looking middle-aged woman, and a little child, the former was lying insensible at the inn, while the latter had escaped quite unhurt. In five minutes I found myself in a small room in the little inn near which the accident had happened; the medical man who attended us was already there, and he took me by the hand and said, "Miss Emily, this is no place for you; this poor woman's life is nearly ended; your presence can do her no good; but if you would amuse this little one, it would be a real kindness, for the poor sufferer seems conscious of her sobs, though of nothing else." So saying, he pulled a little girl reluctantly from the farther side of the bed, where her little face had been buried in the counterpane, and led her towards me. At the first glimpse of me, she bounded forward, exclaiming, "Oh, mamma! mamma!" but a second glance was sufficient to convince her of her mistake, and to make her redouble her cries for her dear nurse. I found Fanchon a powerful auxiliary in gaining the attention of my new little friend; and leaving word that I should take her home to breakfast, we hastened thither, and I really think joy at having met with an adventure almost made me forget to feel sorry for the suffering nurse; at least this I know, that when our friend the surgeon came after breakfast to say that all was over, and found me engaged in a regular game of romps with the child, I felt a pang as though her life had fallen a sacrifice to my negligence. There was nothing, he said, by which it could be ascertained to whom the child belonged, or whence she came; there was no luggage that could have belonged to them, and in the nurse's pocket only a very handsome purse, evidently belonging to a lady, containing a few guineas and some silver; the child's clothes, too, were not marked. The outside passengers had none of them come more than a few stages, and did not know how far the woman and child might have travelled; the latter could give no information, but that she was papa's and mamma's little girl, and that their names were papa and mamma, and nothing else; for herself, she seemed to abound in names, for nothing bright or beautiful in earth or air could be mentioned, but she said, "Mamma call me dat." She was Diamond, and Rose, and Eyebright, and Sunbeam; but the name she always gave when asked, was the very undignified one of Cherry. Cherry she affirmed she was, and very angry she grew when we laughed at her. However, we had no doubt that before the day expired, her parents would arrive; at any rate, the accident that had happened would soon reach their ears, and our little Cherry would be taken from us; but day after day, and week after week, passed, and at last the day came, on which we were to leave Carwell, without one inquiry having been made after the sweet child; for sweet, indeed, she was, and to me, at least, possessed of charms I never saw partaken of by any other. The day before we left, I told my sister that, of course, I should not part with our little plaything till her parents found her: she rather wondered at my encumbering myself in such a manner; but you may suppose her objections were not of a very serious nature, as about six months afterwards she became the wife of a gentleman with eight similar onomastic names; it certainly then became my turn rather to wonder, but I do not think she ever had the slightest cause to regret the step she took, any more than I have to regret mine. Before leaving Carwell, I sent my address in London, whither we were going, to all the hotels and lodging-houses, with a particular description of my little Chérie, and had also an account of the accident again inserted in the newspapers.

My Chérie had evidently been most carefully brought up, and the first thing I did on arriving in London was to purchase a blank book, in which I might carefully record every thing the little girl said that might throw any light upon her past life, for I mistrusted my memory too much to rely on it alone; the second thing I did was to have her miniature taken, that, should she not meet her parents till too much changed for them to remember her, the miniature might be something to appeal to for what she had been when first brought under my notice.

From the very moment of leaving Carwell, I determined to devote my whole time and attention to the welfare of this beloved child, and I commenced a course of reading that I hoped might qualify me for carrying on her education in a very superior manner. I studied

* See the ballad of the Lass of Lochryon.

† See the ballad of Brown Adam in the Border Minstrelsy.

all that Locke and Mrs Chapone, Miss Edgeworth, Hannah More, and Miss Hamilton, had written on the subject, and amused myself with forming schemes, which I thought would combine the advantages of each system without the defects of any. As soon as she became old enough to have a governess, I used great care in the selection of one whom I thought likely to co-operate with me in my plans for conveying the highest degree of polish to the manners, combined with the most solid groundwork of intellectual cultivation. I could, however, seldom retain any governess longer than a few months, my exactions being so very arbitrary, until I received a Mrs Baker, who was every thing that I could wish. This lady was homeless and friendless, and her history interested me so much, that I determined to take her on trial. She had just escaped from France, where she had been a prisoner, and without any means of communicating with her family and friends, for ten tedious years; and when at last, a lonely widow, she reached her native land, it was only to find herself without a friend, and with so small a pittance that active employment was her only resource. I was soon delighted to find the change that took place upon Chérie. Mrs Baker acted in so judicious a manner, and gained so thorough an insight into her character, and so completely regulated her course of instruction by that knowledge, that, when I saw the result, I could not but inwardly resolve to leave her in such excellent hands. Mrs Baker's whole happiness seemed to consist in devoting herself to Chérie; she seldom alluded to her past trials, but when she did, it was always to contrast them with some cause for thankfulness in her present lot; and, on the whole, a more soberly happy trio has seldom passed five years in each other's society. Mrs Baker, from the very first, I found to be no common character, and every month developed new traits which commanded respect and admiration.

When Chérie was about eighteen, I consented to let her pass a few months with my sister, who was going to make a tour through the north of England, while I availed myself of an oft-repeated invitation to visit my friend Lady Marsden, whom I had not seen for many years, though an affectionate correspondence had always been maintained between us. I met with a most cordial reception at Marsden Park, and was so delighted with a beautiful cottage, just outside the Park gates, and looking towards the village green, that, finding it was in want of a tenant, I determined upon renting it, thinking it a favourable pretext for securing a permanent residence for Mrs Baker, by asking her to look after my little household whenever I should be absent; and as I secretly resolved that it should never be my home for very long together, her delicacy would thus be spared the appearance of dependence, which constantly moving about with us would have; besides, I had heard her speak with rapture of the scenery in the neighbourhood, which she said she had visited in the happiest period of her life. I had soon the pleasure of seeing her comfortably installed in the cottage which I longed to bid her call her own, but my kind friends would not hear of my leaving the Park for the present. Among their other guests, was a niece of Lord Marsden's, who lionised me through the old apartments to my very heart's content. We had passed several hours of a long wet morning in a room in the old part of the building, filled with family pictures of those long since gone, like the withered flower (to borrow Herbert's beautiful idea), to revisit their mother earth, but with each of whom Fanny Milton seemed as intimately acquainted as if they were beings of the present generation, and of whose blighted hopes and disappointed fears she had many a thrilling legend to tell; when she said, "Do you know I have a very bold scheme in my mind: I am quite determined to smuggle you into a room where no one but my poor uncle has entered for many years: there is a picture there of his first wife, who, with her only child, was lost at sea, as you know; it is in the first Lady Marsden's dressing-room, and my uncle has never permitted any one to go into it since. He visits it daily, and I can always tell when he has been there, he looks so thoughtful and sad. I often wonder if his present fair lady knows of its existence, at least if she is aware what the room contains, for she must know he often shuts himself up there. I have sometimes thought I would ask her, but I have been checked by a fear of making her jealous. But," she added, laughing, "I have my revenge in store if ever she vexes me, that's all." "But," I said, "how can we possibly obtain access to the room, when even Lady Marsden is not allowed to enter it?" "Oh! leave that to me," she replied; "I go whenever I hear my uncle leave the room, to see if the key is left in the door, and once in every four or five visits I have always been so fortunate as to find it there; and it is so long since I got in, I have a presentiment it will not be long before I manage it again."

About three weeks after this, I was fast asleep one night, when I was awoken by Fanny Milton standing beside me, and saying, "Come, come, Miss Montague, the key is in the door, and I have been waiting till I was quite sure my uncle would be gone to bed; but you must be quick, for my candle will soon be burnt out, and yours, I see, is quite so; but take care you make no noise." There was something very solemn in entering the chamber of the dead clandestinely, and at such an hour too. "How I wish it was daylight!" said Fanny; "this paltry tallow candle is but a poor substitute for the beams of the sun, for I have seldom seen any picture placed in so advantageous a light as this, when the shutters are open." Much as I should have

liked, at any other time, to have looked round this desolate apartment, yet our candle was burning too low in its socket to admit of my noticing any thing but the one object I was come to see. I had only time to take one wistful gaze at the lovely lady, and her sweet child who nestled in her bosom, when our candle suddenly went out, and left us in total darkness. I groped my way back to bed alone (Fanny's room being in an opposite direction to mine), but it was not to sleep; so long a night I never passed in the whole course of my existence; and when day at last dawned, still I thought the hour would never come when I might descend to the library with any hope of finding Lord Marsden there. At last I went down, but found it empty, and I began to fear that he was that morning going to depart from his established rule, of reading there for an hour before breakfast. At length he came, and summoning up all my courage, "Lord Marsden," I said, "I should apologise for my intrusion into a room where I believe you allow no one to enter but yourself; but I trust you will have to thank me for my boldness till your dying day, for I think I cannot be mistaken in saying that this (putting the miniature, which I always carried about with me, into his hands) that this is indeed your long lost little Geraldine." "There is no doubt that it is a most excellent copy of the likeness of my little girl," he said, with a mournful smile; "but I do not quite understand you, Miss Montague," and he looked at me as if he thought I were somewhat beside myself. "Do endeavour to compose yourself," he added, as I burst into tears; "if this miniature has been done by you, I assure you I shall value it very much, for it really is almost more like my dear, dear child, than the picture up stairs."

"Oh, Lord Marsden!" I passionately exclaimed, "why will you not understand me! I mean that Geraldine was not drowned, but that she is my own dear Chérie, of whom you so often have heard me speak." I almost repented having spoken so abruptly, for he looked for a moment so wildly perplexed, that I really feared reason would give way; but, making a violent effort to compose himself, he begged me to tell him, as briefly as possible, the whole history of my little foundingling. "It is indeed strange," he said, when I had concluded, "but I dare hardly trust to my newly formed hopes; for how the nurse and child escaped, while the mother perished, it baffles me to tell." I too was baffled, but when the purse found in the nurse's pocket was produced, and a similar one, half finished, was found in the work-table of Geraldine's mother, no doubt could remain that it was indeed herself. Ere an hour had passed, Lord Marsden was on his way to the Lakes for his daughter, and I was at the cottage, pouring forth into the ear of Mrs Baker the momentous history of the last eight hours. To my astonishment and vexation, she received the intelligence I had to communicate with any thing but joy, and after a few ineffectual struggles to conceal her tears, she gave way to a perfect paroxysm of weeping, exclaiming that Geraldine was now for ever lost to her. "Oh!" she said, "how have I dreaded this day!—come I knew it must, sooner or later; and, oh! what struggles have I had to keep the dreadful secret from her!" I rose in extreme indignation. "And you, Mrs Baker, then have known the secret of your pupil's birth, and have had the meanness to conceal that, from her and myself, which was alone wanting to complete our happiness." She could hardly persuade me to listen to any explanation, so angry was I with her for her concealment. "When you know all," she said, "your blame will be changed into pity. Only promise to repeat to no mortal ear what I say, and I will tell you every thing." I willingly promised, for curiosity will often in a moment subdue, or at least hold in abeyance, the angry passions. "You little thought," she said, "to whom you had given a home. I am Geraldine's mother. Oh! the anguish I have suffered in not daring even to call her Geraldine, and in hearing her conjectures as to who her mother was!" Her sobs almost prevented her speaking, and she looked so really ill, that I willingly consented to her proposal that she should, in the course of the day, send me a written account of her mysterious disappearance for so many years. On my return to the Park, I shut myself up in my own room, pleading the restless excitement I had endured during the night, as my excuse for the fatigue I felt. Thankful was I to hide my feelings from every human eye, till I could in some measure compose myself, and look with a degree of calmness at the strange position in which I stood, as the confidante of Mrs Baker.

In a few hours her letter arrived. I need not transcribe the whole of it. It mentioned that Lord Marsden having left her and Geraldine on a visit with a friend in North Wales, had gone over to Ireland, where he has large estates. While there, she received from a friend in Cork so alarming an account of Lord Marsden's state of health, that she determined instantly to join him. She had a man-servant with her, whom she considered sufficient protection, though she had never in her life undertaken even the shortest journey without having had considerable arrangements made for her; but all difficulties vanished before her earnest desire to rejoin her husband. When she reached Holyhead, she found that the packet had just sailed, and that there would not be another for a fortnight. She had incidentally heard a few days before, that there were packets from Plymouth to Cork every fortnight; so, regardless of the fatigue, she resolved to hasten thither, writing, however, a hurried letter to Lord Marsden, to go by the Holyhead packet, and informing him of her intention, as she thought it possible, after all,

that it might arrive before herself. When she reached Shrewsbury, however, she resolved to send the nurse and child to Carlwell, as she feared the long journey might be injurious to the child, and she knew some intimate friends of her own sex were there who would look after her. She had not time to write to them, but they knew the nurse, and she was to tell them she would write from Plymouth. Most unfortunately, when she reached Plymouth, the vessel was on the point of sailing. She hastened on board, where she soon made the discovery that it was not intended for the accommodation of lady passengers at any rate; but the captain, a coarse, and as she soon began to fear, an ignorant man, was too glad to secure the large sum which the eagerness of the lady made him demand for her passage, to hint to her that it was no place for her. A violent storm came on the next day, which drove them completely out of their course; and after it had subsided, while the captain and crew were all in a state of brutal intoxication, they were taken by a French vessel. Her servant, the only one who offered any resistance, fell dead at her feet, declaring, he hoped they would rather kill his honoured lady than make a prisoner of her. Captivity, however, was her fate.

While in France, she in vain endeavoured to communicate with Lord Marsden; and after ten years of banishment, when, with great difficulty, she succeeded in reaching her own country, the first newspaper she took up contained the marriage of Lord Marsden. "Oh, what a withering of hope was there!" she said; "but I could not for a moment think of intruding a knowledge of my existence on a husband who seemed to have forgot me. I had loved him too dearly to blight his happiness now. I wrote to our banker in London, whom I knew to be a conscientious man; and having first obtained a promise in writing that he would inviolably keep the secret I had to confide, I entreated him to obtain for me, if possible, a situation as companion, or governess; the latter, by a strange accident, I found with you, to take charge of my own daughter. You will now, therefore, understand the depth and reality of the thankfulness which you have so often heard me express to that Providence which so mercifully provided a refuge for me in your house."

The letter concluded with many protestations of gratitude, which it made me blush to read, when I thought how little I felt to that Being who had brought me so far through life without, I may say, a single trial. These reflections, I trust, have not been lost upon me, but have influenced my whole subsequent life.

After Geraldine's return, there was one continued scene of gaiety and festivity at the Park for many weeks, but amidst it all, Geraldine found time to spend some hours each day at the cottage, and I was delighted to observe, that she seemed to love her unknown mother even more tenderly than she had done as little Chérie. Mrs Baker refused all invitations to the Park, and though she always received Lady Marsden's visits with politeness, there never seemed on either part any disposition to an intimacy. Lady Marsden's manner, indeed, altogether surprised me; her remarkably buoyant spirits seemed to forsake her from the hour of Geraldine's return, and she had an abstracted look, and an appearance of constraint, that distressed me. Fanny Milton told me she saw plainly her conjectures respecting her jealousy were but too true; for now that that room was Geraldine's, Lord Marsden was more there than ever. I could not forbear, from my friendship for Lady Marsden, urging her to alter her manner, assuring her the harsh uncharitable world would impute the change to a wrong cause; and though I knew that she indeed loved Geraldine, as though she were her own child, others would suppose it was otherwise. I saw she endeavoured to rally her spirits, but the effort was without success. Not a day passed but some little present was sent by Lord and Lady Marsden to Mrs Baker, and she, who really seemed grateful for the smallest attention from them, sent in return little ornaments for Lady Marsden, of French work, and not unfrequently little airs of her own, often accompanied by beautiful words, which she had written herself. Lady Marsden soon fell into bad health, and at length was ordered to try a warmer climate. She was taken with great care to Madeira, but she had resided only a month in that island, when she died. Some time afterwards I received a packet which had been found in her desk, in which she owned that the cause of her dejection was, a thought had strongly impressed her, that since the child had been saved, the mother might be so also; she said she durst hardly acknowledge her fears even to herself, but they had preyed upon her, so as to take all comfort from her life.

Lord Marsden did not long survive his lamented lady. In returning home from Madeira, he had taken a cold which settled on his lungs, and he died, to the regret of all who knew him. His long self-denying wife, poor Mrs Baker, came to see him just in time to receive one look of recognition, and then his eyes closed for ever. Poor Geraldine! it was indeed a trying day to lose a father and find a mother at once. The joy of the neighbourhood was unbounded at finding Lady Marsden again restored to them; rich and poor flocked to see her, as soon as propriety would permit; and many of her poor aged pensioners in the village, who had often wished Mrs Baker had known the first Lady Marsden, that she might listen with more complacency to their praises of her, wept tears of joy at seeing their dear benefactress once more among them. She now reaped a rich harvest from the care she had bestowed upon Geraldine, who has ever felt that her debt of gratitude

to her mother can never be repaid. Never have I seen mingled respect and confidence so beautifully developed as in Geraldine's behaviour to her mother; how she could gratify her feelings has been the chief object of her life ever since she found her parent, and this she has accomplished without neglecting one relative duty which her marriage or her station in life has imposed upon her.

FLOATING GARDENS AND ISLANDS.

CASHMERE, so celebrated in the East for its romantic beauties and fertile soil, is an appendage of Afghanistan, an extensive and powerful kingdom of Asia, situated between Hindostan and Persia. Cashmere forms one vast valley encircled by lofty mountains (a part of the Himalach range), and extends about ninety miles in length, by from forty to seventy miles in breadth. This great natural hollow affords an excellent illustration of the changes which the surface of the globe is continually undergoing by existing causes. Formerly it was one immense lake, as is clearly shown by horizontal lines running along the face of the mountain on both sides, which mark the gradual subsidence of the waters. So far scientific travellers assert; but tradition of high antiquity goes still further. It asserts, that into this immense basin flowed all the rivers of the surrounding mountains, carrying with them large quantities of soil; but that at length the lake burst for itself a passage through the rocky barrier which confined it, leaving the hollow filled up to a considerable extent with rich alluvium. The extraordinary fertility of the soil warrants the conclusion that at one time an immense quantity of debris was brought thither from the surrounding elevations; but that the subsidence of the waters was gradual, not sudden, is proved by the lines which are traced, as it were like sheep-paths, along the mountain side.

Water or marshy ground still occupies a portion of the valley. The city of Cashmere itself is situated in the midst of numerous lakes, connected with each other, and with the river Vidusta, by canals, separated by narrow lines and insulated plots of ground. Some parts of the city are sufficiently elevated above the water-line to be out of danger on any rise of the water; but the greater portion lies so low, that in considerable inundations, which are far from uncommon, it is liable to be flooded. The depth of the lakes is in the course of being gradually diminished by the accumulated growth of weeds and aquatic plants, and the steady deposition of mud; the surface of the lakes is thus increased, so that the inundations have become annually more frequent, and spread to a greater extent than formerly. These circumstances have suggested to the inhabitants an expedient by which certain vegetables are cultivated in safety, that is, in such a manner as to be afforded as much moisture as they require, without exposure to the risk of being destroyed. Of the method of forming these floating gardens, Mr Moorcroft gives us a very explicit account in his "Notices of the Natural Productions and Agriculture of Cashmere." It is effected, he informs us, through the medium of a floating support, of which the buoyancy and flexibility prevent the plants sinking into the mass, or being partially covered with it. Various aquatic plants spring from the bottom of the lakes, such as water-lilies, convolvuluses, sedges, reeds, and the like; and as the boats which traverse these waters take generally the shortest lines they can pursue to the place of their destination, the lakes are in some parts cut, as it were, into avenues separated by beds of sedges and reeds. In these places, then, the farmer establishes his cucumber and melon floats, by cutting off the roots of the aquatic plants just mentioned about two feet under the water, so that they completely lose all connection with the bottom of the lake, but still continue attached to each other. When thus separated from the soil, they are pressed into closer contact, and formed into beds of about two yards in breadth, and of an indefinite length. The heads of the sedges, reeds, and other plants of the float, are next cut off, placed upon its surface, and then overlaid with a thin coat of mud, which is left gradually to insinuate itself into the mass of matted stems. The bed floats, but is prevented from drifting about by a stake of willow being driven through it at each end, which admits of its rising and falling, in accommodation to the rise and fall of the water.

The gardens are now in a state of complete preparation for the reception of the vegetable to be raised. The gardener has in readiness a number of cucumber and melon plants, which have been raised under mats; and of these, as soon as they have got four leaves, he places them on the floating mass, at about two feet distance from each other. The labour is now completed, no further care being necessary but that of collecting the fruit. The whole expense is confined to the value of the labour, which is exceedingly trifling, as the work is soon done. Perhaps a more economical method of raising cucumbers cannot be devised. For the most part, the islands will bear a man's weight, but generally the fruit is picked off by a person sitting in a boat. "I traversed," says Mr Moorcroft, "a tract of about fifty acres of these floating gardens in cucumbers and melons, and saw not above half a dozen unhealthy plants; nor have I seen in the cucumber and melon grounds, in the vicinity of very populous cities in Europe or in Asia, so large an expanse of plants in a state equally healthy, though it must be observed running into somewhat too great

luxuriance of growth." Mr Moorcroft goes on to say that this method of culture might be advantageously extended to other plants besides those mentioned, and observes:—"The traveller who finds the water-melon of vast size, buried in the hot and dry sand of the desert, would not be readily tempted to conclude that it could be raised in nearly equal luxuriance of growth in the cool and humid atmosphere of a floating garden. Yet the fact points out an accommodating power in the constitution of this plant, which may be as largely found in others where at present it has not been supposed to reside. And the subject is of extreme importance, the water-surface of our islands having never been suitably called upon to contribute its share of produce to the maintenance of our population." We take the liberty of doubting the conclusions of this writer, as respects this country, for we fear that our climate will prove unsuitable to produce any vegetable of general use on such watery localities.

Floating islands are by no means uncommon. They are found in almost every part of the world, and their general history occupies no inconsiderable portion of the writings of the earlier geographers. The space which they fill, however, is proportioned rather to the wonder which the idea of such a thing excites, than to their economic importance. They are simply formed by the roots of plants and trees interlacing with each other, and thus, as in the case of the floating gardens of Cashmere, constituting a support for layers of earth. After having been undermined or torn away by the waters from the banks, or bottoms of lakes, to which they were attached, by their lightness and spongy consistency, joined to their inconsiderable thickness, they remain buoyant on the surface of the waters. Our own beautiful lake, Loch Lomond, contains several of them, and they are found in other sheets of water in Scotland, and also in Ireland. A small lake in Artois, near Saint Omer, is covered with floating islands. The marshy lakes of Comacchio, situated near the Gulf of Venice, present a great number; indeed, it is in such boggy situations that they are most likely to be formed. The most considerable noticed any where are those of the Lake of Gerlau in Prussia, which furnish pasturage for one hundred head of cattle; and that of the Lake of Kolk, in the country of Osanbruck, which is covered with beautiful elms. Some of these floating islands appear and disappear alternately. The Lake Ralang, in Smaland, a province of Sweden, encloses a floating island, which, from 1696 to 1766, has shown itself ten times, generally in the months of September and October. It is two hundred and eighty feet in length, by two hundred and twenty in breadth. There is an island similar to it in Ostrogothia; and we have seen a small one on Derwent water in Cumberland.

A TASTE FOR READING.

In an admirable speech on the subject of common-school education, delivered by Governor Everett at a late public meeting at Taunton, Bristol county, in one of the New-England states, the following passages occur on the cultivation of a taste for reading:—

"It is a great mistake to suppose that it is necessary to be a professional man, in order to have leisure to indulge a taste for reading. Far otherwise. I believe the mechanic, the engineer, the husbandman, the trader, have quite as much leisure as the average of men in the learned professions. I know some men busily engaged in these different callings of active life, whose minds are well stored with various useful knowledge, acquired from books. There would be more such men, if education in our common-schools were, as it well might be, of a higher order; and if common-school libraries, well furnished, were introduced into every district, as I trust in due time they will be. It is surprising, sir, how much may be effected, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, for the improvement of the mind, by a person resolutely bent on the acquisition of knowledge. A letter has lately been put into my hands, bearing date the 6th of September, so interesting in itself, and so strongly illustrative of this point, that I will read a portion of it; though it was written, I am sure, without the least view to publicity.

"I was the youngest (says the writer) of many brethren, and my parents were poor. My means of education were limited to the advantages of a district school, and these, again, were circumscribed by my father's death, which deprived me, at the age of fifteen, of those scanty opportunities which I had previously enjoyed. A few months after his decease, I apprenticed myself to a blacksmith in my native village. Thither I carried an indomitable taste for reading, which I had previously acquired through the medium of the society library; all the historical works in which, I had at that time perused. At the expiration of a little more than half my apprenticeship, I suddenly conceived the idea of studying Latin. Through the assistance of an elder brother, who had himself obtained a collegiate education by his own exertions, I completed my Virgil during the evenings of one winter. After some time devoted to Cicero, and a few other Latin authors, I commenced the Greek. At this time it was necessary that I should devote every hour of daylight, and a part of the evening, to the duties of my apprenticeship. Still I carried my Greek grammar in my hat, and often found a moment, when I was heating some large iron, when I could place my book open before me against the chimney of my forge, and go through with *tuptis, tuptis, tuptis*, unperceived by my fellow apprentices, and, to my confusion of face, with a detrimental effect to the charge in my fire. At evening, I sat down, unassisted and alone, to the Iliad of Homer, twenty books of which

measured my progress in that language during the evenings of another winter. I next turned to the modern languages, and was much gratified to learn that my knowledge of the Latin furnished me with a key to the literature of most of the languages of Europe. This circumstance gave a new impulse to the desire of acquainting myself with the philosophy, derivation, and affinity of the different European tongues. I could not be reconciled to limit myself in these investigations to a few hours after the arduous labours of the day. I therefore laid down my hammer and went to New Haven, where I resorted to native teachers in French, Spanish, German, and Italian. I returned at the expiration of two years to the forge, bringing with me such books in those languages as I could procure. When I had read these books through, I commenced the Hebrew with an awakened desire of examining another field; and, by assiduous application, I was enabled in a few weeks to read this language with such facility, that I allotted it to myself as a task, to read two chapters in the Hebrew Bible before breakfast each morning; this, and an hour at noon, being all the time that I could devote to myself during the day. After becoming somewhat familiar with this language, I looked around me for the means of initiating myself into the fields of oriental literature, and, to my deep regret and concern, I found my progress in this direction hedged up by the want of requisite books. I immediately began to devise means of obviating this obstacle; and after many plans I concluded to seek a place as a sailor on board some ship bound to Europe, thinking in this way to have opportunities of collecting at different ports such works in the modern and oriental languages as I found necessary for this object. I left the forge and my native place to carry this plan into execution. I travelled on foot to Boston, a distance of more than a hundred miles, to find some vessel bound to Europe. In this I was disappointed, and while revolving in my mind what steps next to take, I accidentally heard of the Hall of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester. I immediately bent my steps towards this place. I visited the Hall, and found there, to my infinite gratification, such a collection of ancient, modern, and oriental languages, as I never before conceived to be collected in one place; and, sir, you may imagine with what sentiments of gratitude I was affected, when, upon evincing a desire to examine some of these rich and rare works, I was kindly invited to an unlimited participation in all the benefits of this noble institution. Availing myself of the kindness of the directors, I spend about three hours daily at the Hall, which, with an hour at noon, and about three in the evening, make up the portion of the day which I appropriate to my studies, the rest being occupied in arduous manual labour. Through the facilities afforded by this institution, I have been able to add so much to my previous acquaintance with the ancient, modern, and oriental languages, as to be able to read upwards of fifty of them, with more or less facility."

I trust I shall be pardoned by the ingenious author of this letter, and the gentleman to whom it is addressed, for the liberty I have taken, unexpected, I am sure, by both of them, in thus making it public. It discloses a resolute purpose of improvement (under obstacles and difficulties of no ordinary kind), which excites my admiration, I may say my veneration. It is enough to make one who has had good opportunities for education, hang his head in shame."

A FEW WEEKS ON THE CONTINENT.

COBLENTZ TO MAYENCE.

COBLENTZ—the Confluentia of the Romans—occupies a situation of great beauty on the triangular point of land formed by the junction of the Moselle with the Rhine. The latter river rises in France, and after a winding course of three hundred miles through much picturesque scenery, and passing several ancient towns—among the rest Treves—here falls into the Rhine. The wines produced in the countries on its banks are celebrated for a light pleasant flavour and high aroma, and are chiefly sent to Coblenz for exportation. Both as a centering point for the traffic of the valley of the Moselle, and for the populous district on the middle Rhine, the situation of Coblenz is favourable for commerce; but, unfortunately, from political causes, and particularly from the military character of the place, comparatively little advantage is derived from the excellence of its locality. At present, it possesses 14,000 inhabitants, and a garrison of 4000 men.

It is impossible to pay a visit of only a few hours to Coblenz, without being affected by a sense of the evils incidental to the maintenance of a warlike attitude. Wherever we turn our eyes, we behold the appearances of armed force. Instead of seeing a town generously unobscured itself with ample quays on the Rhine and Moselle, we perceive high loop-holed walls rising along the margins of these fine deep waters, absolutely shutting out commerce, and leaving a petty traffic from a few boats to be carried on by a kind of sufferance at a quay of trifling dimensions situated near the central outlet from the town. Instead of seeing a town stretching freely away into the country behind, and possessing environs embellished with the villas of gentry and merchants, we perceive a closely packed cluster of streets, bounded by ramparts and ditches, and guarded with cannon. Amidst such emblems of barbarism and violence, it excites no surprise to see thoroughfares, mean, foul, and swarming with a

miserable population; even the more elegant and modern parts of the town are marked by certain symptoms of neglect and ruin. The condition of Coblenz is very hopeless. It is the centre-point of a cluster of armed fortresses, forming the impregnable bulwark of Prussia, and must of course follow the fate of that kingdom. First in the list of these military strengths, is Fort Kaiser Franz on the opposite side of the Moselle, flanked by two smaller forts, the Moselle Arrow and Nuendorf—the three guarding the route by the Moselle, and the route to Cologne. Second, Forts Alexander and Constantine, situated on a rising ground overhanging the town on the inland side. Third, and last, the Fort of Ehrenbreitstein, which occupies a broad rocky mount on the opposite side of the Rhine, the valley of which it sweeps right and left, besides commanding the country behind. On looking around, therefore, from the walls of Coblenz, we find ourselves in the heart of, perhaps, the very strongest military post in the world, that of Gibraltar or Malta not excepted.

The rocky knoll of Ehrenbreitstein (the broad stone of honour), with its wreathing loopholed walls bristling with cannon, rises almost closely from the river on its right bank, and both in height and aspect reminds us of Edinburgh Castle. The fort has long been celebrated for its powers of defence. In the wars of Louis XIV., it held out against and defied that monarch, with all the force he could bring against it. In the wars of the French republic (1798-99), it also held long out against the best generals of France, but was ultimately delivered up in consequence of famine. To such extremities was the garrison reduced by hunger before yielding up the place, that the flesh of cats and horses was sold at from a shilling to two shillings a pound. The French retained the fort till 1801, when they abandoned it, and blew it up. Latterly, it has been rebuilt according to the best principles of fortification. The lines of Byron, commemorative of its shattered condition, will recur to recollection:—

Here Ehrenbreitstein, with her shatter'd wall
Black with the miner's blast, upon her height
Yet shows of what she was, when shell and ball
Rebounding idly on her strength did light:
A tower of victory! from whence the flight
Of baffled foes was watch'd along the plain:
But Peace destroyed what War could never blight,
And laid those proud roofs bare to Summer's rain—
On which the Iron shower, for years, had pour'd its rain.

At the foot of rocky precipices, and close upon the Rhine, stands the small town of Ehrenbreitstein—in which, by the way, facing the river, there is an excellent quiet hotel, the Weissen Ross, or White Horse, which I can, from experience, recommend to travellers. The communication between this side of the Rhine and Coblenz, is kept up by means of a platform bridge laid on thirty-seven stout barges, moored in the stream, and measuring 485 paces in length. Following the course of the Rhine up to this point, the country on both banks has belonged to Prussia, but a short way above Ehrenbreitstein, the right bank ceases to belong to that power, and forms part of the duchy of Nassau.

Coblenz is connected with the left bank of the Moselle by a stone bridge of thirteen arches, which are so lofty that the vessels which navigate the stream do not require to lower their masts in passing below them. The view from the bridge up the serpentine course of the Moselle, embraces a landscape of soft beauty, with Fort Kaiser Franz, and a line of picturesque hills in the distance. The waters of the Moselle, at the period of my visit, though not "blue," or any colour but a dull yellow, were all that a poet could wish; and I have little doubt that the banks would be as charming by the "starry light of a summer's night" as they were when lighted up by the declining sun of an autumnal evening. Crossing the Moselle by its massive stone bridge, and passing a rather attractive suburb on the left bank of the stream, we are speedily led to a rising ground, where stands the monument erected over the remains of Marceau, a young general of the French republican army, who was killed at the battle of Altenkirchen, on the 21st of September 1796. At the interment of his body, both French and Austrians, friends and enemies, attended to do honour to departed worth:—

By Coblenz, on a rise of gentle ground,
There is a small and simple pyramid,
Crowning the summit of the verdant mound;
Beneath its base are heroes' ashes hid,
Our enemy's—but let not that forbid
Honour to Marceau! o'er whose early tomb
Tears, big tears, gush'd from the rough soldier's lid,
Lamenting and yet envying such a doom,
Falling for France, whose rights he battled to resume.

Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career—
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes;
And fitly may the stranger lingering here
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose:
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstep'd
The charter to chastise which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

BYRON.

Returning from this interesting part of the environs of Coblenz, we paid a passing visit to the ancient church of St Castor, a lofty structure with four towers standing on the point of land at the junction of the Moselle and Rhine. St Castor's is an exceedingly old church: it was originally built in the year 836, with foundations resting on Corinthian pillars, and within its walls, in 843, the grandsons of the Emperor Charlemagne met to divide his possessions into Germany, France, and Italy. The church has been partially modernised, particularly at its entrance porch, and does not seem older than the common order of Gothic buildings. Its millennial jubilee was celebrated with great solemnity in 1836. The miserable-looking open square in front of the church, or Casterhof, as it is termed, contains an object of historical interest which is visited by most strangers. This is a substantial stone fountain, which was erected during the occupation of the town by the French in 1812. According to an inscription upon its side, it was erected by Jules Doazan, the French prefect of the department, to commemorate the expedition of Napoleon to Russia. The amusing thing about it is, that the town afterwards fell into the hands of the Russians, and the Russian commandant has inscribed a wickedly satirical effusion below the inscription of the Frenchman. The two inscriptions stand literally as follow:—

AN. MDCCCXII.
Memorable par le Campagne
Contre les Russes,
Sous la prefecture de Jules Doazan.

Vu et approuve par nous, Commandant Russe,
de la ville de Coblenz
Le 1 Janvier 1814.

Seen and approved by us, the Russian commandant of the town of Coblenz, the 1st of January 1814! One could hardly have expected such an admirable piece of railery from a Russian; but in 1814 the Russians could afford to laugh at France.

During the excursion-season in summer and autumn, the shore of the Rhine at Coblenz exhibits a busy scene of arrival and departure of steam-boats; and from this point travellers have an opportunity of proceeding in various directions in search of the picturesque. Such are the arrangements of the steam-boat companies, that tourists from Cologne may either proceed directly onward to Mayence without stopping, or stop all night at Coblenz, and proceed in the morning. The journey from Cologne, however, which occupies an entire day, is quite sufficient to fatigue the tourist, and he wisely betakes himself to a hotel, to wait till the morning's light brings a renewal of his toil. The steam-vessels, both of the Rhine and Moselle, lie at the small quay below the bridge of boats, and are reached by a platform or gangway, resting on several barges moored in the water. This is a species of jetty to be seen at various places on the Rhine, and I beg to recommend it as worthy of imitation at places in our own country, where regular piers for the accommodation of passengers do not exist.

Early on the morning of our departure from Coblenz, we secured our places in an excellent steamer, which lay hissing at one of these convenient barge jetties, and the bridge of boats across the river being opened to allow a passage up the stream, our vessel set merrily off on its trip to Mayence. The district of Rhine scenery lying between Coblenz and Mayence, is much more picturesque than that farther down the river. The banks are for the greater part more rocky and precipitous, and shoot up in rugged conical mounts, or vine-clad steeps, from the brink of the stream. Still, however, a highway pursues the edge of the river, along the left or Prussian bank; the solid rock being in various places cut away with great labour and expense, to permit its continuous course. There is also a road on the right or Nassau bank, but it is neither so regular nor so complete as the other. For those who have time to spend in performing the journey upwards by these land routes, stopping at villages and old castles by the way, and inspecting the scenery from the heights above the river, a much more interesting tour may be executed than by sailing in the steam-vessels; but the latter mode of journeying will be found much the easiest, the cheapest, and, I believe, except to decided view-hunters, the most satisfactory in every respect.

The view of the Rhine looking upwards from Coblenz, I have already described as being exceedingly beautiful. At the head of the open reach through which the steamer now threads its way, passing in its course the pretty island of Oberwerth, we perceive, perched on a rocky height on the left bank, the magnificent ruin of Stolzenfels, a castle supposed to have been built in the thirteenth century, and which was destroyed by the French about the year 1690. Immediately opposite is the valley of the Lahn, a river of Hesse and Nassau, which here adds its waters to the Rhine. The banks of the Lahn are equally romantic with those of the Rhine, and are as interesting from the number of old towns and castles. The opening of the valley is strikingly marked by the ancient church of St John standing on the point of land at the

junction of the Lahn with the Rhine, and beyond is seen Niederlahnstein, the first of the towns of Nassau; opposite, on a craggy knoll on the left bank of the Lahn, is the old picturesque ruin of Lahneck castle, which, with that of Stolzenfels across the Rhine, reminds us of the castle of Drachenfels, and its opposite guardian of the pass, Rolandseck. Passing these imposing memorials of a time of feudal warfare, and their respective old villages beneath them, we proceed up a tolerably long reach of the river, between banks richly clad with vine gardens, and are soon opposite Rhenze, a little old town, on the left bank. This is a spot of historical interest. At the distance of three or four hundred paces below Rhenze, and close to the road, are still to be seen four stones of moderate dimensions, part of the ancient and venerable monument called Königstuhle, where the electors of the Rhine frequently assembled to deliberate on the interests of Germany. Unfortunately, the edifice, which was an octagon resting on pillars, was destroyed by the French in 1794. A short way beyond Rhenze we come to the ancient castle of Marksburg, which is still entire, and stands on the top of a high rocky mount overhanging the river on its right bank. It is occupied as a state prison of Nassau.

The Rhine now makes a considerable bend, and we are carried in front of the town and castle of Liebenck. A little farther on, after making another serpentine turn, and passing two or three villages, the vessel approaches the populous, but old and decayed town of Boppard, on the left bank; above the town is an ancient large edifice, once a nunnery, but now forming a cotton-spinning factory. Next, on the right bank, we pass the romantic ruins of two castles, Sternberg and Liebenstein, planted on the summit of two craggy knolls, within less than a hundred yards of each other. Below, at the water's edge, are the church and convent of Bornhofen. Proceeding onwards, the banks become more and more rocky and wild in their character, the river having, in some places, the appearance of ploughing its way through a ravine, whose shelving sides are too steep to afford footing for the vine-dresser, and are shaded only with natural tufts of bushes and trees. Through this wild tract, the Rhine describes a number of short turns, and at each seems to enter a completely land-locked sheet of water, silent as a Highland lake, and occasionally diversified with a small shrubby islet, set as a gem on its glittering bosom.

Proceeding upwards through this wildest part of the river scenery, we have our attention successively called to the castles of Thurnberg and Katzenelenbogen, both in ruins, on rocky knolls on the right bank, and opposite them, on a high cliff on the left, the massive ruined fortress of Rheinfels. This castle, which is the largest on the Rhine, was originally built by the Count of Katzenelenbogen, in 1245, principally for the purpose of enforcing tribute on the passage of vessels on the river. Ten years after its erection, the confederation of free Rhenish towns, enraged at the exactions of the count, marched an army against the castle, and besieged it for fourteen months. They were not successful in their efforts, but the spirit they manifested spread over the country, and led to a general crusade against this and every other robber castle on the Rhine; so that about the end of the thirteenth century, almost every castle, from Mayence to Cologne, was taken and destroyed. Hence, a main cause for such a lengthened series of ruined fortlets. Rheinfels was afterwards enlarged and modernised by the Landgrave of Hesse, but was finally given up to the French in 1794, when it was blown up, set on fire, and completely destroyed. The marks of the conflagration are now visible on its blackened walls and ruined windows. The remains of the fortress, with its gardens, lawn, and vineyards, were purchased for 500 francs, by an individual who has built an inn adjacent, and shows the ruined dungeons and outworks to strangers.

At the base of the cliffy bank of Rheinfels, stands the poor old town of St Goar; and opposite it, on the other side of the river, the towns of St Goarshausen, and village of Neubrückhausen. Immediately beyond St Goar, we come to one of the narrowest parts of the river, overhung with almost perpendicular cliffs, and known by the name of the Lurle; here, in order to bring out the echoes for which the spot is celebrated, a musket is usually fired, as the steamer passes, by a man placed on the road under the cliff. The river, in passing the strait, is more impetuous and turbulent than is usual in its course, and the spot has received the name of Lurle, or water spirit, from a wild legendary tale, which describes the dangerous pass as being haunted by a fair female spirit who lures the poor navigator of the Rhine to destruction. There has been no instance, I believe, of her having made any attempt to mislead steam-vessels, or having been seen by any of their passengers. Another legend of the Rhine affixes the name of the Seven Sisters to as many rocks, which at certain seasons, when the stream is low, show their heads above the surface of the water. These, we are told, were seven daughters of the lord of Schomberg, whose castle is adjacent at Oberwesel, and were, for some haughtiness of demeanour towards a prince of the fairies in disguise, transformed into rocks while bathing. Passing, then, these seven unfortunate young ladies, we are speedily at Oberwesel (left bank), a town of two or three thousand inhabitants, and distinguished at a distance by its handsome Gothic church, and the ruins of the

castle of Schoenberg or Schomberg, which looks down from a rocky hillock beyond.

A new reach in the river exposes the small old town of Caub on the right bank, and above it, on a steep rock, the ruins of the castle of Gutenfels. Nearly below Gutenfels, and on a rock in the middle of the Rhine, stands the ancient castle of Pfalz, composed of a central tower and lower buildings around it, the whole walled in, and only approachable by a temporary wooden stair let down to the verge of the rock. Pfalz belongs to Nassau, and served at one time as a toll-house for the river, and as a state prison. To an apartment in this isolated fortlet, also resorted for protection, during the turbulences of the middle ages, the countesses of the palatinate on occasions of their secouchements—a fact conveying an impressive testimony of the horrid insecurity of life and person in the age of chivalry and romance. Next, on rounding a bend of the stream, we have before us, on the left bank, the old town of Bacharach, which is said to derive its name from a rock situated in the middle of the river, called by the Romans Ara Bacchi, the Altar of Bacchus. The rock is believed to have received this odd appellation, from an idea that when it was prominently visible above the water in summer, there would be a good vintage—in other words, when the summer is dry and warm, the grapes ripen to the greatest perfection, a truth which it would be quite needless to dispute. In passing Bacharach, and casting a glance up the ascending braes above the town, we perceive the shattered ruin of the church of St Werner, consisting of a few vacant Gothic arches, of light and elegant construction. The story of St Werner is too extraordinary to pass unnoticed. He was a pious youth, who lived some eight or nine hundred years ago at Oberwesel, where he was barbarously murdered, though by whom, is not clearly stated. The body having been thrown into the Rhine, instead of floating downwards with the current, as all common bodies it may be supposed would have readily done, was carried upwards against the current, and went ashore at Bacharach, from which it would not budge an inch till taken up and buried in a particular spot above the town, as the body of a canonised saint. This ceremony was speedily performed by the amazed and overawed inhabitants; and to mark their sense of the distinguished honour shown to their town by the murdered body, they erected a church over its tomb. The number of miracles which were wrought in after ages at the shrine of St Werner, are said to have been very considerable.

A short way beyond Bacharach, but on the right bank of the river, we pass the town of Lorch, and the ruins of the castle of Nollingen above it. On the opposite side are seen successively the ruined castles of Furstenthal, Heimbürg, Sonneck, and Falkenburg, also the castle of Vautsburg or New Rheinstein. This latter fortlet, which has been restored by the royal family of Prussia, stands on a jagged rock half way up the cliffy bank rising from the margin of the river, and is mentioned as well worthy of a visit by strangers, on account of the style of its architecture, and the ancient armour, carving, embroidery, painted windows, ancient vessels, and other things it contains, all in perfect keeping with the feudal character of the structure.

We now approach a part of the river where the current is so rapid that the steam-vessel is unable to compete with it unassisted, and accordingly, a number of horses standing ready on the right bank are attached by ropes, and aid in bringing the steamer into the placid water at the head of the rapid. In proceeding upwards, about this place, we pass on the right bank, the small town of Asmauhausen, and beyond it, most extensive vineyards, to which it gives its name. The vineyards of Asmauhausen are among the most curious things one sees on the Rhine. Steep hills ascend from almost the edge of the river to a height of about eight hundred feet, and are, over the whole surface, disposed in the usual form of terraces to the very summit. On one of the highest we reckoned twenty-one or twenty-two terraces, resembling the steps in a pyramid, each step being shorter and smaller than that below it, till at the top the terraces were on the most diminutive scale. The sight of this hill, covered with beautiful light green vine plants in full leaf, is one of the most pleasant we behold in the whole course of the journey up the river, for besides the actual beauty of the verdant scene, it testifies to the patient industry of the people, most of whom depend for their subsistence on the precarious harvest of the vines.

On issuing from the pass and rapid at Asmauhausen, and making a bend round the rocky promontory, on which stand the ruins of the castle of Ehrenfels, the steamer may be said to have left the wild and romantic tract of the river, which began at Boppard, and now enters a scene of an entirely different character. The Rhine expands to a greater breadth, the hills retire and slope backwards on each side with easy ascent, and at a short distance farther up, are succeeded by rich level fields and partial elevations. Just at the entrance to this charming district, and on the left bank, is situated the town of Bingen, on an angle of land formed by the junction of the Nahe and the Rhine. The Nahe here forms the boundary betwixt the Prussian dominions and the principality of Hesse, the latter stretching up the left side of the Rhine towards Mayence. On a rock in the Rhine nearly opposite the embouchure of the Nahe, stands

the castle of Malisethurm, or mouse tower, regarding which, enmity and superstition have preserved a tale, that has been turned into verse by Mr Southey, detailing the cruelties of a Bishop Hatto of Mayence, who, while concealing himself in this his tower of strength, was devoured by an army of rats. Unfortunately for the credibility of the story, the tower was not built till two centuries after the death of Bishop Hatto, who, also, instead of being a man of a merciless disposition, was a person of princely munificence, and conferred an important boon on the district, by clearing away the rocks in the river at this spot, and rendering the stream navigable.

Bingen is an admirable starting point for those who wish to explore on foot the beauties of the country on both banks of the river, including the scenery of the Nahe. The soft and beauteous stretch of country commencing on the Rhine at Bingen, is locally styled the Rhinegau, or Rhine country, and within this fertile tract the finest wines are produced. The richest wine district is on the north-east, or right bank of the river, from which the low hills wave far into the distance, and expose to the southern sun an universal garden of vines. First, we have Asmauhausen, then Rudesheim, Johannisberg, and fifty other localities, one after the other, all celebrated for the superior quality of their wines, and lying within the compass of two or three miles on these rich sloping banks. In the midst of this terrestrial paradise—for, dressed in the garb of summer, with the broad Rhine in front, dotted with fertile islands, and sheltered by the hills of the Taunus, it really deserves such an appellation—stands Biberich, the princely residence of the duke of Nassau, and town of the same name adjacent. The palace, which occupies a conspicuous situation near the Rhine, is a large and handsome edifice, built in the old French style. The gardens behind are said to be very beautiful. When at Biberich, we have almost reached Mayence, for, after passing it, and issuing from behind a woody islet in the river, the towers of that ancient city are before us, rising, like those of Colibent, from the margin of the left bank of the Rhine.

Here let us pause. We have been carried through a tract of not less than fifty miles, forming one of the fairest and most romantic portions of Nature's domains, and unequalled in any part of the world for its great extent, as well as the lavish abundance of its objects of picturesque beauty. Nowhere, certainly, in the whole hundred miles from Cologne upwards, does the scenery possess those qualities of sublimity and grandeur which we find in such savage regions as Glenore—the generally limited height of the mountain steeps necessarily precluding any character of that kind—but, taken all in all, for the vast number of exquisite points of beauty, and as combining every thing which constitutes the truly picturesque in nature, with the romance in art, the scenery, it must ever be allowed, is altogether inapproachable.

TRANSPORTATION—AS A PUNISHMENT.

A SELECT COMMITTEE of the House of Commons was appointed, in November 1837, to inquire into the "System of Transportation, its efficacy as a punishment, its influence on the moral state of society in the Penal Colonies, and how far it is susceptible of improvement." The Report drawn up by this committee at the close of their sittings, as well as the evidence brought before them, now lie before us, and present many interesting facts relative to the form of punishment which constituted the subject of inquiry. These facts, and the views and conclusions founded upon them, corroborate, in a remarkable manner, the opinions recently stated in this periodical by Miss Harriet Martineau.

The Parliamentary Committee have arranged the result of their labours under the following heads:—First, as to the history, nature, and amount of the punishment of transportation. Second, as to the apprehension produced by the threat of transportation, and its tendency to prevent crime in the mother-country. Third, as to the effects of transportation on the character of those who have undergone that punishment. Fourth, as to its influence on the moral state of society in the penal colonies. Fifth, as to its economical effects on those communities, and to what extent their pecuniary interests would be affected by its continuance or discontinuance. Sixth, as to the cost of the system of transportation. And, lastly, as to whether it be susceptible of improvement; and if not, what substitute might be adopted with advantage. These heads, it is obvious, have reference to almost every point of interest connected with this subject. We propose to follow the Report through each successive division of the inquiry, though, of necessity, in a brief and general manner.

New South Wales, Van Dieman's Land (both, it is well known, Australian colonies), Norfolk Island (a small island lying about a thousand miles to the east of Australia), and the Bermudas (a group in the Atlantic, opposite to the coast of Carolina), are the penal settlements, at this day, of Great Britain. New South

Wales has received, on an average, for the last five years, 3544 convicts annually, and in 1836 the whole convict population of the colony amounted to 25,254 men, and 2577 women; in all 27,831. The average number of convicts sent to Van Dieman's Land during the last five years, is 2078, and the convict population there amounted, in 1835, to 16,968 persons, of whom 2054 were women. Norfolk Island contained, in 1837, above 1200 convicts, most of whom had been re-transported from New South Wales, for offences committed there; and Bermuda holds about 900 convicted persons. These statements show how large is the number of human beings affected by the punishment of transportation. That punishment is proved, by the evidence in the Report, to be at once extremely unequal and severe. In New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land, to which colonies the following remarks chiefly apply, the greater number of the convicts are distributed among the free settlers as assigned servants; the remainder are mostly retained in the employment of government. In some cases, the condition of assigned convicts is comfortable enough, but this is most uncertain, as it depends entirely on the temper and disposition of the masters to whom chance hands them over. The assigned convict is at the mercy of the most summary laws; the lash, imprisonment, solitary confinement, and labour in irons, are the penalties to which, on the responsibility and at the option of individual magistrates, he may be subjected. That these laws are not inoperative, is proved by the fact that, in Van Dieman's Land, in one recent year, the number of lashes inflicted was about 50,000, and the summary convictions 15,000, though 15,000 was the whole amount of the convicts then in the island. In New South Wales, the number of summary convictions, in 1835, was 22,000, and the lashings frightful in amount. It is to be observed, that we do not here advert to the deservings of the convicts. All of these punishments may have been merited, but our purpose at present is merely to prove the actual severity and painfulness of the state of transportation to the assigned convict population. One excellent authority describes the practice of assignment as "cruel, uncertain, prodigal, and ineffectual, either for reform or example." Not less painful to the parties subjected to it, according to the evidence, is the system of employment under government. Most of the convicts thus distributed work in parties at the roads, and, for the most part, in irons. Their condition is wretched in the extreme.

But, while the pains of transportation are, in reality, thus severe, the effect of such severity, in rendering the threat of transportation a matter of fear to criminals and criminally disposed persons in the mother-country, is entirely lost. The punishment is underrated and laughed at, chiefly in consequence of the exaggerated reports which have got abroad respecting the comforts, wealth, and success in life, which have fallen to the lot of various felons in the colonies. These cases are remembered, while the general mass of convict suffering is forgotten or unheard of. For this and other reasons, the punishment of transportation, as now conducted, becomes almost entirely valueless, as regards its tendency to prevent the commission of crime in the parent land. Abundance of evidence is given in the Report in proof of the correctness of this conclusion, but it is sufficient for our purpose here to state that such is the fact.

The third head of the committee's investigation regarded the effects of transportation on those who had undergone the punishment. The amount of crime perpetrated in the penal colonies is partly shown by the summary punishments inflicted annually, but the number of convictions for crimes punishable with death has to be added to the sum. The number of executions in New South Wales is so great, that, supposing the state of crime and punishment in England to be on an equal scale, the latter country would display 7000 executions in one year! The crimes in the penal colonies are, indeed, almost innumerable; yet, of the whole recorded amount, according to the late Attorney-General of Van Dieman's Land, not less than three-fourths are committed by offenders whose sentences of transportation have expired! Can any thing more completely prove the total inefficacy of transportation in amending the character of those who undergo it? Again, as to the effects of the present transportation system on the moral state of society in the colonies, the evidence in the Report presents a most frightful picture. Convict servants, male and female, have been known directly to introduce contamination and misery into numberless families, and their less indirect influence is still more corrupting and subversive of all the better sentiments. The progressive demoralisation of the penal colonies, both as regards the bond and free inhabitants, is but too clearly established by the single statistical fact, that crime has increased in a greater ratio than the population, and, consequently, in a far greater ratio than the number of convicts. "If the existing system be continued," say the committee, in closing their remarks on this head, "the moral condition, it is to be feared, of these colonies, is more likely to be still further deteriorated than improved."

As concerns the pecuniary interests of the penal colonies, and the cost of maintaining the present transportation system, it is unnecessary to say much. The discontinuance of that system would cause an obvious dearth of labourers, but the same cause would send out free labourers in greatly increased quantities; for, undoubtedly, the employment of convicts has had a tendency to bring labour into disrepute with the

classes who would otherwise have emigrated with that view. Such are the numbers of working people at present emigrating to Australia, indeed, that there appears every prospect of a full supply of free labour, ere any great length of time elapses, in that quarter of the world. The expense to the country of the transportation system has all along been very considerable, averaging, since its commencement, L.156,398 a-year. But, at present, it is more than treble that amount, and is rapidly increasing every year. In 1836-7, the sum expended on the military establishments, convicts, &c., was L.488,013, excluding from the calculation the expenses of Bermuda.

Having considered all these points at some length, the committee consider themselves entitled to infer from the whole, "that the two main characteristics of transportation, as a punishment, are inefficiency in deterring from crime, and remarkable efficiency not in reforming but in still further corrupting those who undergo its penalties; that these qualities are inherent in the system, which therefore is not susceptible of any satisfactory improvement; and, lastly, that there belongs to the system, extrinsically from its strange character as a punishment, the yet more curious and monstrous evil of calling into existence, and continually extending, societies, or the germs of nations most thoroughly depraved, as respects both the character and degree of their vicious propensities. Your committee, therefore, are of opinion that the present system of transportation should be **ABOLISHED**." Having stated this conclusion, the Report then proceeds shortly to consider the proper kind of punishment to be substituted for the other. Every individual witness, out of the many competent and well-informed ones examined by the committee, declared the free intercourse of the convicts with one another to be the main cause of the spread of crime and immorality. Even the mere collision on the voyage had been repeatedly known to convert a man who had committed a single offence in the moment of temptation, to a hardened, reckless reprobate. Keeping these evils in view, the committee observe, that "the experience of all nations, and more particularly the inquiries which have been instituted of late years, appear to establish the conclusion that some modification of the penitentiary system is best calculated to inspire terror, and to improve the moral character of an offender; and as far as any inference can be drawn from a comparatively short experience, it appears that these two main objects of punishment are most likely to be obtained by that form of the penitentiary system which is known as the separate system of America."

The separate system, as detailed in previous numbers of the present periodical,* consists in the incarceration of delinquents in separate cells, no one criminal having any access to or sight of another criminal during the whole period of confinement, but is well provided with work, and receives the visits of secular and religious teachers, and other functionaries connected with the prison. The beneficial influence of this mode of punishment—a mode which reclaims instead of vitiating offenders—is incalculable, and must in time supersede the worse than useless practices now pursued with reference either to the galleys or to transportation. The main objection to the substitution of the separate system for transportation is, it seems, the very great expense which would attend the building of the necessary prisons. But surely the people of this mighty empire, who have recently given twenty millions to ensure the freedom of the unfortunate Africans, would never hesitate to devote their means to the liberation of so large a body of their fellow-countrymen—erring though they may be—from the bonds of vice, crime, and misery, if once fully assured that such a result was practicable. The site of such prisons or penitentiaries is a matter for further consideration. The Parliamentary committee recommend that the shorter sentences should be undergone at home, and the longer ones abroad, in some place fixed on for the purpose. The advantage of having the principal penitentiaries abroad is obvious. The chances of communication between the prisoners and their friends would be lessened; the distance would render the punishment a greater object of dread; and the opportunities of turning the convict labour to the defrayal of the establishment's expenses, would be much greater. On the other hand, if the prisons were at home, the expenses (of removal, &c.) would be materially diminished, and the eye of the government would be more directly upon them. A mixed system, partly domestic and partly colonial, would probably suit all purposes best. Norfolk Island seems to the committee to be a place well suited for the purposes of a distant penitentiary of this kind, having a healthy climate, a small population, and other advantages for securing the comfort as well as the seclusion of the convicts.

In conclusion, it may be noticed that the committee strongly advise, in case of an alteration in the transportation system, that the new scheme should have some provision for the removal of reformed criminals to new scenes, where their past history may not be known, and where their good conduct may win them a fair and respectable place in society. This seems to them, and certainly is, a most important consideration. Altogether, comparing the probable issue of these suggested improvements in our penal legislation, with the actual consequences of the system as it stands, few will be inclined to say that it would be wise or

proper, on mere pecuniary considerations, to refrain from a trial of the change. The recorded results of the present system present so strong a contrast to the ameliorations in morals and disposition described as attendant on the separating penitentiaries, that every one, it seems to us, must be convinced, both of the necessity for amendment, and of the peculiarly appropriate and suitable nature of the change proposed.

THE TURF.

SOME ten or fifteen years ago—certainly twenty years ago—prize-boxing matches were quite common in England, and, we should suppose, were relished by a large class of the community, for a leading periodical used to entertain its readers with articles, almost monthly, on Boxers and Boxing. Boxing-matches are now of so rare occurrence, that they can hardly be said to exist—the practice of men beating each other to death, for the amusement of hundreds of spectators, is no longer tolerated. Social improvement proceeds only by slow degrees: the people have lost boxing, but they still retain the Turf, or horse-racing, which answers pretty well as a means of moral debasement, and is yet any thing but out of fashion, as the following passages from Mr Grant's "Travels in Town" will help to show.* The author begins with a glance at Epsom races.

"Until twelve o'clock, crowds continue to arrive on the race-course, not only from London, but from all parts of the country within a circuit of twenty or thirty miles. What an immense concourse of human beings! There cannot be less than 250,000 persons there. And see how well dressed the vast majority of them are! Ragged coats or faded silks are but rarely witnessed. Whatever may be the condition of the pocket or the belly, there is no cause of complaint, with very few exceptions, on the score of the back. If there be a lack of money or of food, there is no lack of raiment. And how elegantly dressed are a very large proportion of the immense assemblage! The women are gorgeously so. You would find it a task of some difficulty to point out a score of ill-dressed females within a moderate distance of the place at which you stand. Witness the forest of waving plumes of feathers. You wonder where they all came from; you had no idea before, that London could have furnished such a supply. How brilliant the aspect which the vast numbers of ladies who are present give to the immense assemblage! Their attire is elegance and splendour combined—their persons are handsome—and the charm caused by such a display of beauty and fashion would be complete, but for the unpleasant fact obtruding on your mind, that a very considerable portion of them are of exceptional character. But let that pass. The face of the adjoining hill, extensive as is the space it embraces, appears as if instinct with life. Persons of all ranks and classes are there crowded together as densely as it is possible for them to be. See also both sides of the race-course, fully a mile and a half in length. Carriages, coaches, phaetons, cabs, carts; vehicles of all sorts, in short, are there ranged as closely as they can be, three or four deep, from nearly one extremity of the course to the other. And so thickly tenanted are they, chiefly with elegantly attired ladies, that it is with difficulty the parties can find standing room. Those large tents you see here and there, and every where, are so many portable gambling places, in which the work of plunder is going on at a fearful rate. Thousands are on the eve of ruin by the result of the impending race; the ruin of the foolish persons who are throwing the dice there, is already proceeding at a most rapid pace.

The horses about to start appear on the field, and the work of betting, as people see them with their own eyes, begins afresh. In a few minutes more, the bell rings to summon the animals to the starting point and the starting position. That moment there is a rush on the part of the tens of thousands who were occupied in amusing themselves in various ways outside, towards the dense masses of men, women, horses, vehicles, &c., which line the margins of the course. A few minutes elapse between the ringing of the bell and the issue of the race being declared. And what an important fraction of time is that to thousands who are present! Their prosperity or ruin—their future happiness or misery in this world—their affluence or beggary—the weal or the wretchedness of their wives and children, are all wrapt up in the events of five or six minutes. The signal is given for starting. "Go!" shouts a loud voice at the starting post. The horses are all off. Now commences the frightful tempest of conflicting feelings in the breasts of multitudes before you. The horse which a party has backed against the field, starts fair; he is ahead. Imagine, he who can, the hope and joy mingled with fear which agitate such a person's bosom. The animal is distanced by some fleetest steed; the demon of despair seizes the party in a moment, in his iron grasp. He is a ruined man; his wife and family are in one moment hurled from the heights of affluence, to the lowest depths of poverty. He can scarcely support himself; he would fall prostrate on the ground, but that he is kept up by the pressure of the crowd. Had he the means and the opportunity, the probability

is that he would, in the agony of his remorse and despair, that moment destroy himself. This is no imaginary picture—no exaggerated description of the tempest which rages in a man's bosom, when he has been infatuated enough to stake his all on the result of a horse-race, and that result has been adverse. It is only a few years since a case was brought before the public, which fully equalled the one I have here supposed.

The concluding race takes place. It is over! and there is a universal rush towards the road leading in the direction of home. Such a scene of bustle and confusion as is now presented! Vehicles come in collision, and, what is worse, pedestrians are often jammed between two or more of these vehicles. The sufferers shriek, the ladies scream, and the drivers of the vehicles swear at, and abuse, and blame each other. Horses become restive; legs are broken, and bones are fractured. Great injury is done to the limbs of her majesty's subjects: it is fortunate if no lives be lost. The more tender-hearted of the myriads present feel for those who have already suffered, and are filled with fear and trembling lest other and still greater disasters should yet occur. Eventually the ground appears less densely peopled; the immense concourse assembled are now rapidly undergoing the process of dispersion. The majority of the tenants of the vehicles, and of the equestrians and pedestrians, have now forced their way to the road, and are earnestly bound in a homeward direction. Did you ever see such a road! Did you ever witness such extensive lines—all as close as they can be, so as to be able to move—of carriages, cabriolets, carts, horses, and human beings! Never, I will answer for it. You fear there must yet be many accidents before they all get home. Your fears are but too well founded; for I believe there has never yet been a Derby day in which there have not been a greater or less number of accidents, many of them serious: it is well if none prove fatal.

The amount of money which changes hands immediately after the conclusion of the leading races, is immensely great. I have heard it stated by one of the leading sportsmen of the present day, that at least L.1,000,000 changes hands by the result of the Derby race at Epsom. Surely there must be an exaggeration here. If there were only half that sum, which I am convinced there is, it would be a very large amount. In some cases particular individuals bet to the extent of L.20,000, L.30,000, and even L.40,000, on a single event. In 1826, Lord K——, one of the most celebrated Turfites of the present day, bet L.30,000 to L.1000 against a horse called Crusader. In the same year, another sporting character bet L.20,000 against General, which was the favourite horse, and won it, but it was commonly believed there was foul play. Mr R——, the distinguished Yorkshire sportsman, won at the Derby race of 1832, the sum of L.40,000 by backing St Giles, which was his own horse, exclusive of L.2775 in stakes. This was certainly good work for one day.

Horses of great reputation on the turf always bring large sums. From L.2500 to L.3500 is quite a common price for a first-rate horse. As high as 5000 and even 6000 guineas, has repeatedly been given. One of the well-known proprietors of a great gambling house in Bennet Street, gave 5000 guineas for Ludlow at the Doncaster races of 1832. Some years ago, the Duke of Cleveland gave L.12,000 for four horses.

So great is the supposed inequality of the horses that are entered to contest the leading prizes, that it is quite common to bet fifty or sixty to one, against a particular horse. In several cases one hundred to one have been bet that a certain horse would not win. The greatest disproportion I have heard of in the betting on any horse, was in the case of one which ran for the Derby some years ago, when two hundred to one was bet against him.

While some horses never gain more than one prize, others have a continued course of good luck. The mare Fleur de Lis won no fewer than ten out of eleven races. But the horse, which, of all others, continued to run for the longest time, and which gained the greatest number of prizes, was Dr Syntax. This horse continued on the turf ten consecutive years, and ran in the course of that period no fewer than forty-nine times. Out of this number of contests, Dr Syntax won the prize in twenty-six instances. Among the prizes thus gained were twenty gold cups.

All disputes which arise about matters directly appertaining to the turf, must be referred to the decision of the stewards of the Jockey Club. This is the only recognised tribunal in such matters. Its decision is final: there is no appeal from it. The Jockey Club consists of upwards of sixty noblemen and gentlemen of more or less standing in the sporting world. The stewards are three in number. One retires every year to make way for another, the retiring steward having the right to name his successor.

The turf is on the decline. Every friend of morality, and every one who wishes well to his fellow-creatures, will rejoice at this. What are now the leading horse-races, but gambling transactions on an extensive scale! There is a numerous gang of sharpers and black-legs, who make the plunder of simpletons who bet on horse-racing a part of their daily schemes and daily roguery. Their plans are secret, but they are deeply laid, and are carried out with a skill and artfulness which render their success almost a matter of moral certainty. And even where they are detected, it is not, unhappily, until they have fleeced their victims. What villanies have

* Travels in Town, by the author of "Random Recollections of the House of Commons." 2 vols. London, Saunders and Otley.

of late been brought to light, which have been practised at our leading horse-races! But in no instance have they been discovered in sufficient time to save the unsuspecting simpletons whose money was at stake. And what care the unprincipled 'legs' for exposure, when it comes not until after they have pocketed the money of their victims! Nothing at all; for they have no character to lose. And they know the law cannot reach them. Who does not remember the disgraceful transactions which took place at the Doncaster races of 1832! And are not certain transactions of the most unprincipled kind, which occurred at a celebrated race a few months ago, and by which thousands have been ruined, still the subject of animated and indignant remark in all the sporting circles! The affair of the horse Ludlow is still fresh in the recollection of all patrons of the turf; and that of Harkaway, at a very recent race, is not likely to cease to be spoken about for some time to come. Is it not beyond all question, that horses, which otherwise would have won, are often prevented from winning by the most consummate rogues! In some cases they are drugged so as to make them sick; in others, the jockeys are bribed to ride them in such a way as to prevent their coming in first. A very common expedient resorted to by the 'leg' fraternity, when they have made the arrangements to their entire satisfaction beforehand, is to withdraw the horse which was the greatest favourite, by either purchasing him from the proprietor, or pretending to have purchased him. In fact, there is no end to the tricks of the turf. The ramifications of the rogues practised by the mendacious gamblers who are so largely mixed up with all turf transactions, are so varied and extensive, that no calculation or foresight can guard against their effects. So cunningly and skillfully are their schemes for plundering her majesty's subjects laid, that they often, with the view of gulling the public, bet to a certain extent in favour of the favourite horse, though they know he will lose. A little loss in this way is amply made up by secretly betting to a large amount the other way; or by some other private arrangement made among themselves. Another favourite expedient on the race-course is to invent all sorts of rumours respecting different horses—rumours relative to the probability, or otherwise, of particular animals running; and thus raising the odds, or causing them to fall in particular cases, according as their own interests are affected. Scarcely less notorious for the invention of false rumours on the part of a gang of black-legs, is the race-course, than is the Stock Exchange itself. With regard, again, to the running of favourite horses, it is now so common a practice for the parties interested to manage matters in such a way as that they shall not win—that it has of late become customary with the recently initiated, before betting for or against any favourite horse, to do every thing he can to ascertain whether or not it really be meant or intended by the proprietor that the horse shall win.

The public, who know little or nothing of the tricks of the turf, never contemplate the possibility of any person entering a favourite horse, far less of his starting him for the race, without being most desirous that he should win, and, consequently, are victimised without, perhaps, ever suspecting that there was aught else than perfect fairness in the matter. It is well known that many hundreds of pounds have been given to proprietors of favourite horses, to bribe them not to win the race; and it is equally well known that the jockeys destined to ride such horses, have, when not directly bribed by the 'legs' to lose the race, often received through the proprietors two or three hundred pounds for riding in such a way as to cause the horse to make a respectable appearance on the race-course, and thus fall suspicion of any treachery without winning the prize.

The trickery which is practised on the turf may be inferred from the character of the persons who most largely patronise it. Who are these! Notoriously the leading proprietors of gambling-houses in London, and the principal frequenters of those houses. As to gambling noblemen and gentlemen: why, there is not one of any notoriety in our London hells, that is not equally well known on the turf. I could here run over in dozens the names of dukes, of marquises, of earls, and of noblemen and gentlemen of every rank, professed devotees of gambling at the hazard-tables of the hells in town, who are equally notorious for their patronage of the turf. And how many of these are there, who are bankrupt in fortune as well as in character!

Then there are the false notions of honour that prevail on the turf. Such are these notions, that Turfites feel bound to pay, provided they can at all raise the amount, any losses they may incur by betting, even though their tradesmen and families should not only be suffering the greatest privations in consequence of the non-payment of the amount due to them, but should be brought to the verge of ruin on that account. How many poor tradesmen suffered, and how many of themselves or their successors still suffer, from the non-payment by the late Duke of York, of the debts he contracted with them! And yet he always made a point of paying the losses he sustained on the turf. It was the same in the case of his brother, George IV., when Prince of Wales; and it is the same with numbers of noblemen whose names might be mentioned. Such is the morality which obtains on the turf. Such are the notions of honour that are entertained by its votaries.

The turf, then, is a most prolific source of social evil. I am convinced it would be impossible to estimate the

amount of mischief it has done to morals, to families, and to society: It first destroys all the better feelings of one's nature, and then destroys one's fortune. Could all those that are still alive, who have been ruined by the turf, be brought into one place, what a vast and wretched assemblage of human beings would they present!"

AUGUSTUS BROOM,

A SONG.

TUNE—"On a Bank of Flowers."

In a parlour gay, one summer day,
With heat and port oppress,
Augustus Broom, a young bridegroom,
Lay down to take some rest;
When Agnes sweet, his darling bride,
Came in and sat down by his side,
And said, "My dear, your Nancy's here;"
He with a more replied.
"What, asleep!" said she, "and as yet but three
Weeks since we two were wed;
I thought of a walk, or at least some talk;
Is all your fondness fled?
Do give me some attention, pray,
And let not Nancy have to say,
That when she has dressed, and done her best,
Her pains are thrown away.
Nay, since you will be snoring still,
I know what I shall do;
Those whiskers fair, beyond compare,
I'll clip a curl or two.
I know you love them passing well,
And would not one for a kingdom sell.
But 'twill serve you right for this shameful slight,
And be a joke to tell."
The deed was done, and she thought 'twas fun,
For hair can grow again;
But when Broom did feel the cold hard steel,
He started up amain.
"My dear," he cried, with a frantic roar,
And quickly off both whiskers tore.
"It is too bad—you would make one mad—
They cost me two pound four!"

February 2, 1838.

ANECDOTE OF LADY —, AUTHORESS OF

"AULD ROBIN GRAY."

[By N. P. Willis.]

ONE of the most elegant and agreeable persons I ever saw was Miss Porter, and I think her conversation more delightful to remember than any person's I ever knew. She is still what I would call a handsome woman, or, if that be not allowed, she is the wreck of more than a common allotment of beauty, and looks it. I have passed many months under the same roof with Miss Porter, and nothing gave me more pleasure than to find the company in that hospitable house dwindled to a "fit audience though few," and gathered around the figure in deep mourning which occupied the warmest corner of the sofa. In any vein, and apropos to the gravest and the gayest subject, her well-stored mind and memory flowed forth in the same rich current of mingled story and reflection, and I never saw an impatient listener beside her. I recollect, one evening, a lady's singing "Auld Robin Gray," and some one remarking (rather unsentimentally), at the close, "By the bye, what is Lady — (the authoress of the ballad) doing with so many carpenters? Berkeley Square is quite deafened with their hammering!" "Apropos of carpenters and Lady —," said Miss Porter, "this same charming ballad-writer owes something to the craft. She was better born than provided with the gifts of fortune, and in her younger days was once on a visit to a noble house, when to her dismay a large and fashionable company arrived, who brought with them a mania for private theatricals. Her wardrobe was very slender, barely sufficient for the ordinary events of a week-day, and her purse contained one solitary shilling. To leave the house was out of the question; to feign illness as much so; and to decline taking a part was impossible, for her talent and sprightliness were the hope of the theatre. A part was cast for her, and in despair, she excused herself from the gay party bound to the country-town to make purchases of silk and satin, and shut herself up, a prey to mortified low spirits. The character required a smart village dress, and it certainly did not seem that it could come out of a shilling. She sat at her window, biting her lips, and turning over in her mind whether she could borrow of some one, when her attention was attracted to a carpenter, who was employed in the construction of a stage in the large hall, and who, in the court below, was turning off from his plane, broad and long shavings of a peculiarly striped wood. It struck her that it was like ribbon. The next moment she was below, and begged of the man to give her half a dozen lengths as smooth as he could shave them. He performed his task well, and depositing them in her apartment, she set off alone on horseback to the village, and with her single shilling succeeded in purchasing a chip hat, of the coarsest fabric. She carried it home, exultingly, trimmed it with her pine shavings, and on the evening of performance, appeared with a white dress, and hat, and belt ribbons, which were the envy of the audience. The success of her invention gave her spirits and assurance, and she played to admiration. The sequel will justify my first remark. She made a conquest on that night of one of her titled auditors, whom she afterwards married. You will allow that Lady — may afford to be tolerant of carpenters!"—*Pencilings by the Way*, in *New York Mirror*, Dec. 30, 1837.

CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL.

WE have now completed SEVEN volumes of the Journal: the present number forms the commencement of the EIGHTH. This, in itself, is a commonplace circumstance, and would be undeserving of any notice, if it did not afford us a convenient opportunity of thanking our numerous friends and readers for their continued support of our humble miscellany. Those who wish well to CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL, will be glad to be informed that the circulation of the work continues on the same unabated scale of advancement as formerly, and at this moment is higher than at any previous period of its history. During the past year, we have printed 3,552,000 sheets, which, divided by 52, gives an average weekly impression of 68,300 numbers. We are not vain enough to suppose that this extent of support to our work has reference to any peculiar capabilities of our own, but is assignable to the taste which now largely prevails for healthful moral instruction and matter of innocent and rational entertainment. It would appear from the success of our periodical, that even in the midst of great social jars, there is in this country a widely spread disposition to rely on the simple and soothing charms of literature for daily thought and amusement. The period at which our work began (February 1832) was apparently most inauspicious for any undertaking of the kind; yet, on the first day of publication, 20,000 copies were sold in Scotland alone; and notwithstanding the agitations in society during the last seven years, the circulation of the work has never at any time declined a single copy; it has, on the contrary, steadily advanced to its present point. Viewed only as a fact in literary history, we think such a circumstance not unworthy of notice, for it helps to throw light on the constitution and feelings of society, and in some measure proves that the people at large, to whom our paper appeals, are desirous of cultivating the arts and pleasures of peace. One great leading principle has guided us, as a pilot through the storms which warred and continue to war around us, and to that we shall steadfastly adhere, so long as we shall be enabled to edit these sheets; that principle is the avoidance of all points calculated to awaken the more bitter class of controversial feelings. WE ADDRESS OURSELVES TO MANKIND AT LARGE—not to a party or a class. We recognise in our readers and supporters only human beings, and care not what country or clime they are of, or what station in society they occupy: it gives us as much sincere gratification to learn that our sheets are read in America, Australia, and India, as to know that they are sought for on the banks of the Tweed or the Thames. Acting from considerations of this nature, and throwing ourselves on the world at large for support, we, of course, seek no special patronage or favour, and without in the smallest degree disparaging the efforts of others, hope only to be permitted to follow out our own comprehensive scheme for the moral and intellectual improvement of our fellow-creatures.

Without relaxing our endeavours to furnish original papers of an interesting kind for the pages of the Journal, it may be mentioned, that we continue to devote a portion of our time to the preparation of the series of works for use in schools and in the private instruction of youth, entitled CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE; also to the series of publications issued under the general title of PEOPLE'S EDITIONS. Both of these series, we are happy to say, have met with a success only inferior to that of the Journal, notwithstanding that the last mentioned has been imitated in different parts of the country. There are now issued sixteen volumes of the EDUCATIONAL COURSE, several of which have been published during the past year, and of the PEOPLE'S EDITIONS seventeen distinct works; others are in a state of preparation. It is an important feature of the PEOPLE'S EDITIONS, that where necessary for their improvement, considerable editorial care is exerted, so that the editions are in many cases superior to those which have hitherto appeared. This peculiar feature of the works—never, perhaps, before attempted to be given to this class of cheap publications—places them, it is humbly represented, on a footing very different from that of mere reprints. Of those now published, Paley's Natural Theology, Franklin's Life, Parli's Life and Travels, and the Works of Robert Burns, furnish examples of such improvement; and it is hoped that these will be regarded as a pledge of our anxiety to render the series suitable to the advanced state of knowledge, and acceptable to the enlightened classes of the community.

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